



LOWELL VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE

QUESTIONS 1 & 2 The City of Lowell will change the system by which City Councilors and School Committee Members are elected from the current, at-large plurality system starting in 2021. Questions 1 & 2 ask voters to express a preference on the two potential new election systems.

The decision to change the City's current election system was prompted by a May 2017 lawsuit challenging it under the Voting Rights Act. After a series of mediation sessions with plaintiffs, the City agreed to change its election system. Four potential election system options were agreed to in a consent decree settlement. The two options appearing on the ballot were selected as "finalists" by the City Council in September 2019. Each option is expected to increase the opportunity for minority groups to elect their preferred candidates.

Questions 1 & 2 are non-binding, and are intended to gauge voter preference. The Council will consider the results in making a final determination on a new system on or before December 3, 2019.

QUESTION 1 Ranked Choice Election System ("Proportional Representation")

SUMMARY

In the Ranked Choice Election System, you will continue to elect 9 City Councilors and 6 School Committee members, who will all run city-wide and represent the whole city. You will, however, rank candidates by order of preference, choosing somebody as your No. 1 choice, somebody as No. 2, etc. You may vote for as many people as there are candidates, but always in ranked order. The final count of the votes is based on the ranking.

WHAT YOUR VOTE MEANS

A YES vote means that Ranked Choice *is* your preference for the new election system.

A NO vote means that Ranked Choice *is not* your preference for the new election system.

The results of this question will be taken into consideration by the City Council in making a final determination on the election system.

QUESTION TEXT

Of the two options that the City can choose from, do you support the adoption of a Ranked Choice election system (also called "Proportional Representation"), according to which: the City will continue to have 9 City Councilors and 6 School Committee members; all candidates will run as at-large/city-wide representatives; and voters may vote for as many candidates as they wish, ranking their choice of candidates according to their preference? Yes: ☐ No: ☐

QUESTION 2 District & At-Large Election System ("Hybrid" System)

SUMMARY

In the District & At-Large, or "Hybrid," System, the city will be divided into 8 districts. The City Council will be expanded from 9 to 11 members, and will include 8 district representatives—one from each district—and 3 at-large or city-wide representatives. The School Committee will have representatives from 4 districts, each comprised of two of the city districts, and 2 at-large members. You will vote for one district representative for each of the Council and the School Committee, and up to 3 at-large representatives for the Council and up to 2 at-large representatives for the School Committee.

WHAT YOUR VOTE MEANS

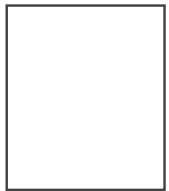
A YES vote means that District & At-large *is* your preference for the new election system.

A NO vote means that District & At-large *is not* your preference for the new election system.

The results of this question will be taken into consideration by the City Council in making a final determination on the election system.

QUESTION TEXT

Of the two options that the City can choose from, do you support the adoption of a Combined District and At-Large System (also called a "Hybrid" system), according to which: the City Council will be enlarged to 11 members composed of 8 district representatives and 3 at-large/city-wide representatives; the School Committee will be composed of 4 district representatives and 2 at-large/city-wide representatives; and voters may vote for (A) one district City Council candidate and three at-large City Council candidates, and (B) one district School Committee candidate and two at-large School Committee candidates? Yes: ☐ No: ☐



QUESTION 3 *not related to election system change Adoption of the Community Preservation Act

SUMMARY

The Community Preservation Act allows cities and towns to establish a dedicated funding source to acquire and preserve open space, parks and conservation land, protect public drinking water supplies and scenic areas, protect farmland and forests from future development, restore and preserve historic properties, and help meet local families' housing needs. In the City of Lowell, the Community Preservation Act will be funded by an additional excise of 1% on the annual tax levy on real property, which, with the exemption below, would be approximately \$24.50 per year for a \$350,000 single family home. This would raise in excess of \$700,000 annually, and would allow the City to access to matching funds from the Community Preservation Trust Fund, up to a potential 100% match. Since 2002, the Fund has distributed over \$600 million in matching funds. If approved, the following will be exempt from this surcharge:

1. the first \$100,000 of the value of residential property;
2. property owned and occupied by any person who qualifies for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing;
3. certain commercial and industrial properties.

WHAT YOUR VOTE MEANS

A YES Vote means that you want the City to adopt the Community Preservation Act at the 1% rate, which will allow the City to access matching funds from the Community Preservation Trust Fund. A NO Vote means that you do not want the City to adopt the Community Preservation Act.

This question is binding.

QUESTION TEXT

Shall the City of Lowell accept Sections 3 to 7, inclusive, of Chapter 44B of the General Laws, as approved by the Lowell City Council, a summary of which appears below?
Yes: ☐ No: ☐

MUNICIPAL ELECTION: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH, POLLS OPEN: 7am to 8pm



POLLING LOCATIONS

To find out where you vote, visit:
wheredoivotema.com



CHECK YOUR REGISTRATION

Verify your voter registration status online at
<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/voterregistrationsearch/>



ABSENTEE BALLOTS

The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot is Monday, November 4th



OTHER QUESTIONS

For additional information, contact the Election & Census Department at: 978-674-4046

Traducción - para ver esta información en Español, visite:

Tradução - para visualizar esta informação em Português, visite:

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yourlowellyourvote.org/ballot